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Thompson Hine Taps Former OSU Basketball Star As Next MP

By **Tracey Read**


Anthony White

Law360 (February 21, 2024, 11:06 AM EST) -- Thompson Hine LLP announced Wednesday that it is transitioning its leadership from one of the first women to lead a large firm to one of a handful of African Americans currently in the top role of a BigLaw outfit.

Trial partner Anthony "Tony" White will take over the reins as managing partner of the Cleveland-headquartered firm May 1 from Deborah Read, who has been in the role since 2012. Read will continue to focus on the firm's innovation efforts and her practice as a tax lawyer, the firm said.

White said in a statement that he looks forward to advancing the positive momentum that Read initiated.

"I'm also dedicated to upholding our commitment to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment, recognizing the value and richness that diversity brings," he said. "Our aim is to actively promote equity within the legal profession and our firm, focusing on enhancing opportunities for underrepresented lawyers."

White was not available for comment Wednesday.

White represents clients in complex business litigation, specializing in the transportation and logistics industry. He has been lead litigation counsel in 39 states in cases ranging from complex class actions and national Fair Labor Standards Act collective action claims to simultaneous multidistrict trade secret and noncompetition litigation.

The firm said White is one of only about a dozen Black managing partners to have held the position at a top firm at any point.

He's served on the firm's executive committee for 13 years, and for 11 years has been the national hiring partner, supervising Thompson Hine's lateral partner and senior counsel recruiting and hiring. He is also the immediate past partner in charge of the firm's Columbus office, where he led strategic expansion and business operations in that market for 10 years.

Read called White — a graduate of The Ohio State University and Northwestern University School of Law — an excellent choice to succeed her.

"The development of his leadership skills started early — when he was selected as the captain of The Ohio State Buckeyes basketball team," she said in a statement. "There is a recognized correlation between sports and business leadership success, and Tony has it. He is a seasoned leader with the vision and experience to guide the firm toward a successful future. I am confident Thompson Hine will benefit greatly from Tony's charisma, commitment and focus on innovation."

White has been appointed to leadership positions with organizations including the Big Ten Conference Anti-Hate and Anti-Racism Coalition, a group of student-athletes, coaches, athletic directors, chancellors and presidents who analyze and resolve diversity, equity and inclusion issues throughout the Big Ten Conference.

He was also Ohio State's sole representative to the Big Ten Advisory Commission for 13 years, including two years as chairman. The Advisory Commission's mission is the academic and athletic advancement of African American student-athletes and coaches at member institutions.

White recently received the National Diversity Council's Multicultural Leadership Award, the firm said.

He has also served on the boards of directors for organizations including United Way of Central Ohio, The Ohio State University Hospital, The Ohio State University President's Advisory Council, The Ohio State University Varsity "O" Alumni Association and Marburn Academy, a school dedicated to the academic development of children with learning disabilities, the firm said.

He was a member of Ohio State's varsity basketball team from 1985 to 1989, serving as team captain in 1989 and being named to the Academic All-Big Ten Team in 1988 and 1989.

White was also a color analyst for the Big Ten Network, broadcasting Ohio State games for years, and he was the basketball analyst for one of the largest radio stations in Ohio for over 25 years. He now is a regular color analyst for the Dayton Flyers basketball team, according to his firm biography.

Under Read's leadership, the firm has become known for its focus on innovative tools and processes, including the SmartPaTH initiative, a program that merges legal project management, value-based pricing, flexible staffing and process efficiency.

When Read was first elected, she was one of fewer than 10 women leading the 200 largest U.S. law firms.

--Editing by Robert Rudinger.

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